# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
# LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:87
ANSWERED ON:06.03.2002
MALPRACTICES IN WORKING OF MEDICAL STORE ORGANISATION
E. AHAMED;SURESH KURUP

**Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:**

(a) whether the Government are aware of the malpractices in the working of the Medical Stores Organisation as reported in `Times of India` dated January 30, 2002;

(b) if so, whether a perceived nexus between officials and drug companies had bent stringent inspection rules;

(c) if so, the details of the irregularities; and

(d) the action taken by the Government thereon so far?

## Answer

MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR)

(a)to(d): A statement is laid on the table of the Lok Sabha.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 87 FOR 6.3.2002

Government is aware of the news report titled `Bitter Pill` which appeared in the Times of India dated 30.1.2002.

This news item gives an impression that the Medical Stores Organization (MSO) has made somereport, which reveals a nexus between corrupt government officials and drug companies to bend stringent inspection rules. No such report has been made by the Medical Stores Organization. It is also not true to say that there is any nexus between government officials and drugcompanies. There are stringent procedures for quality assurance of drugs to be supplied through the Medical Stores Organization. Procurement of drug is made through firms registered with MSO. Each and every batch of drug is subjected to test in government approved laboratories. The drug is accepted for supply only after receipt of satisfactory test reports from the laboratory.

The Drugs Controller General (India) has advised the State Drug Controllers to take effective measures like activating State Drug Advisory committees, establishing intelligence-cum-legal machinery with police assistance, undertaking surveillance of suspected dealers and obtaining cooperation of pharmaceutical industry through regular interaction with them, etc.

The newspaper report also makes references to selling of magic drugs and stimulants. The government has already published draft notification prohibiting advertisement of claims of cure or treatment of AIDS. So far as the reference to deaths as a result of fake medication is concerned, no such report has been received from the state authorities. Strict penalties have been prescribed under the amended Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1982, making it clear that if deathor hurt is attributable to the drug being adulterated or spurious, the punishment provided is imprisonment for not less than five years which may extend to a term of life and fine which shall not be less than rupees ten thousand. In so far as the reference to WHO`S report is concerned, the office of the WHO in India hasstated that they have not made any statement saying that India has got the dubious distinction of being the world leader in counterfeit drugs production.